

Unit Commanders Course

Director/Instructor Guide

Successful Leaders

Lesson Plan

DURATION: 50 Minutes

TEACHING METHOD: Lecture/Discussion

REFERENCES: Student Guide, slide presentation

TEACHING AIDS/HANDOUTS: Student Guide, slide presentation

READING ASSIGNMENT: Student Guide

Lesson Objective:	Comprehend the characteristics and traits which contribute to making a successful leader.
Behavioral Objectives: At the end of this segment you will be able to:	<ol style="list-style-type: none">1. Describe the basic traits of a manager.2. Describe the basic traits of a successful leader.3. Discuss the difference between managers and leaders.4. Explain why communication is leadership's critical success factor.5. Discuss five questions to ask when evaluating leadership ability.

Lesson Strategy

This segment is designed to describe the traits of successful leaders. Emphasis will be on how commanders can develop their leadership skills in order to become more effective.

This lesson will first examine the traits of managers, then leaders. Discussion will emphasize the difference between managers and leaders. After, the lesson shifts to a discussion of communication as the critical factor for leadership success. Finally, members will learn to evaluate their own leadership potential by asking themselves five specific questions.

The teaching outline provides an introduction, outline of the main points, and a conclusion to be adapted as required to meet the needs of a particular wing. The presenter should personalize the lesson to reflect the unique characteristics of the wing.

Use the suggested questions to tie the lesson together at the conclusion.

Lesson Outline

MAIN POINTS:

- I. Traits of managers.
- II. Traits of successful leaders.
- III. Differences between leaders and managers.
- IV. Communication: the critical success factor.
- V. Five critical questions that help to assess leadership potential.

Teaching Plan

Lesson Objective

Comprehend the characteristics and traits which contribute to making a successful leader.

ATTENTION:

Do you consider yourself a leader? Who do you believe are successful leaders? Why do you feel they are successful?

MOTIVATION:

Being a commander does not automatically make you a leader. You were appointed as a commander by the stroke of a pen, but becoming a leader is far more complicated. You may have heard that leaders are born, not made, or vice versa.

OVERVIEW:

This section is not designed to answer that question. What this section can do is make you more aware about the traits that successful leaders have, explain the difference between leadership and management, and finally learn a way to help you assess your own leadership ability.

Transition

STATE: What are the characteristics of a successful leader? To answer that question, we must first define two terms that are often treated as the same thing: manager, and leader.

MP I. Traits of managers

- A. Plans.
- B. Controls.
- C. Organizes.
- D. Equated with things and programs, not people (in this context).

MP II. Traits of successful leaders

- A. Communicate, strategize, and coach.
- B. Are able to effectively delegate.
- C. Look at the larger picture.
- D. Are good followers.
- E. Aligns goals with those of the organization.
- F. Are good managers.

MP III. Differences between leaders and managers

- A. Managers work with objects and programs, logic and analysis.
- B. Leaders succeed with people – they motivate and inspire.
- C. Managers are not necessarily leaders, and vice versa.
- D. Successful leaders however, also cultivate their managerial skills, and focus their efforts to accomplish the mission.

MP IV. Communication: the critical success factor

- A. Talk to your members.
- B. Listen to your members.

MP V. Five critical questions that help to assess leadership potential

Questions and answers

Use the suggested questions to facilitate the discussion, and field any questions that the students may have.

Conclusion

SUMMARY:

Being a successful leader takes time, effort, an awareness of your personal strengths and weaknesses, and an understanding of the people you work with.

CLOSURE:

What is a successful leader? The answer is different for everyone. What is certain is that successful leaders follow a certain pattern, and understand themselves, their people, and their objective.

Suggested Questions

1. What do you think is meant by the statement, “Managers direct things, not people,” when discussing the difference between managers and leaders?

Answer: Answers vary, but look for something like: Managers concentrate more on programs and resources, relying on logic and analysis to make decisions, whereas leaders tend to concentrate on the human side of the decision, how people are affected.

2. Why do you think it is important for a successful leader to be a good follower?

Answer: It reduces friction between the unit and higher echelons, and it sets a positive example for those who work for you.

3. What is leadership’s critical success factor?

Answer: Communication.